



How the Jewish Federation of LA Went From a 5% Donation Rate to a 25.4% Donation Rate

In past years The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles received donations from less than 5% of their small donors. This year their donation rate shot up to 25.4%, with 2 small changes.

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[The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles](#) aims to touch every Jewish Life in Los Angeles, Israel, and the world.

In order to continue impacting lives, raising funds is of utmost importance.

This is the how they grew their donation rate from small donors more than 400%.

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In late 2016 The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles was experiencing a problem familiar to many non-profits: they had thousands of small donors who had given in past years, but had not given this year.

In past years they had asked for and received donations from less than 5% of their smaller donors.

This year their donation rate from a similar campaign was 25.4%.

As it turns out, the way you ask someone to give will profoundly affect how much they are willing to give.

But what changed???

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Well, if you want a > 400% increase in donation rates, you might have to change a couple of things at once.



The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles changed their campaign in 2 main areas:

1. They further segmented their messaging
2. They upgraded from printed mail to handwritten letters

1. Segmentation and messaging:

In the past, The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles had used the exact same messaging for:

- Those who had donated once
- Those who had been donating for over a decade

Segmenting their messaging was important to make sure it came across as as written directly to them, not a simple direct mail “blast”.

Now The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles could ask long-time donors for their continued support, and ask them if they’ll “continue their beautiful tradition of caring for our community”.

Giving for the first time is also beautiful. They communicated this, with a different message, to this other segment of donors.

Bottom line: You want your donors to feel like they’re one in a million, not one of a million.

2. Print vs. handwritten letters:

Giving is a deeply emotional act. If you touch someone’s heart, you and they can move the world.

And sending handwritten letters is often a perfect way to touch hearts.

However, in sending handwritten letters instead of printed direct mail pieces, The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles took a risk.

Writing out handwritten letters, one by one, would take weeks and hundreds of person hours. Hours that they could have been spending more fruitfully.

But outsourcing handwritten letters to [Letter Friend](#) was much more expensive than their 5%-response-rate mailers.



Would it be worth it?

The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles bit the bullet and had [Letter Friend](#) produce 1000 beautiful (if we do say so ourselves!) handwritten cards.



(we branded their cards with a painting by Marc Chagall)



(this is what 1000 letters looks like before they're sent)



After their campaign was mailed, overjoyed donor responses began to roll in. And of those responses, nearly all contained checks.

*In fact, for every letter that The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles sent out, they got **\$48.39** back.*

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Do you think sending handwritten letters would help you bring in more donations?

We'd love to share the exact messaging and beautiful, relevant, stationery that The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles is using to create even more impact for their community.

Just reach out to hello+jwf@letterfriend.com or [book a quick meeting](#) with us and we'll set aside a few minutes to share!